

We claim:

1. A pole connector assembly for connecting first and second pole sections, the pole connector assembly comprising:
  - 5 an insert dimensioned to be received within an end of the first pole section, the insert having a one-piece unitary body and an aperture defined in the body; and
  - a fastener having a first end insertable into the aperture to secure the insert within the first pole section, and a second end coupled to the second pole section.
- 10 2. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein the insert body further comprises at least one projection, the at least one projection being deflectable with respect to a remainder of the insert body, and wherein the fastener is insertable into the aperture to limit inward deflection of the at least one projection of the insert.
- 15 3. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein the fastener is deformable.
4. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein the fastener further  
20 comprises a base and at least one projection extending from the base, the at least one projection being deflectable with respect to the base of the fastener.
5. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 4, wherein the at least one  
25 projection of the fastener is shaped to engage the insert in a tongue-and-groove connection.
6. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 2, further comprising a recess in an end of the at least one projection, wherein the fastener further comprises at least one projection received within the recess in an inserted position of the fastener in the aperture.
- 30 7. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 2, wherein the fastener is insertable into the insert to deflect the at least one projection toward an internal surface of the first pole section.

8. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 2, wherein the fastener is insertable within the insert without appreciable deflection of the at least one projection.

9. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein the fastener is U-shaped.

10. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein the fastener is insertable into the aperture in a press-fit engagement.

11. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein the fastener is insertable into the aperture to frictionally engage the fastener in the insert.

12. A pole connector assembly for connecting first and second pole sections, the pole connector assembly comprising:

an insert dimensioned to be received within an end of the first pole section, the insert having:

a body having at least one portion being deflectable outwardly from the body; and

an aperture defined in the body; and

a fastener having a first end insertable into the aperture and movable to a position with respect to the at least one portion of the body in which the fastener substantially inhibits movement of the at least one portion of the body, and a second end coupled to the second pole section.

13. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 12, wherein the first end of the fastener is insertable into the aperture to deflect the at least one portion of the body toward an internal surface of the first pole section.

14. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 12, wherein insertion of the fastener into the aperture generates no appreciable deflection of the at least one portion of the body.

15. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 12, wherein the fastener further comprises a collar portion shaped to be received in at least a portion of the insert, the collar portion having an enlarged cross-sectional area relative to a remainder of the fastener.

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16. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 12, wherein the at least one portion of the body includes at least ten projections.

17. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 12, wherein the at least one  
10 portion of the body includes at least four projections.

18. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 12, wherein the at least one portion of the body is shaped to engage an internal wall of the first pole section upon deflection of the at least one portion of the body.

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19. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 12, wherein the fastener includes a body having at least one inwardly-deflectable portion.

20. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 19, wherein the at least one  
20 inwardly-deflectable portion of the fastener body is shaped to engage an internal wall of the insert in at least one of a tongue-and-groove engagement and a snap-fit engagement.

21. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 19, further comprising a recess defined in an end of the at least one portion of the insert body, wherein the at least one  
25 inwardly-deflectable portion of the fastener body defines an enlarged end of the fastener shaped to be received within the recess in the insert body.

22. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 12, wherein the first and second ends of the fastener each have at least one inwardly-deflectable portion.

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23. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 12, wherein the fastener is U-shaped.

24. A pole connector assembly for connection of two sections of a pole, the pole connector assembly comprising:

5 an insert dimensioned to be received within an end of a first pole section, the insert having a body portion and an aperture defined in the body portion; and a deformable fastener engagable within the aperture in the body portion of the insert and connectable to a second pole section.

25. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 24, wherein the fastener is  
10 resiliently deformable.

26. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 24, wherein the fastener is resiliently engageable with an internal wall of the insert at least partially defining the aperture.  
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27. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 24, wherein the fastener includes at least one projection, the at least one projection deflectable with respect to a remainder of the fastener upon insertion of the fastener into the insert.

20 28. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 27, wherein the at least one projection of the fastener has an outwardly-protruding enlarged end engagable with an end of the insert in an inserted position of the fastener in the insert.

29. The pole connector assembly as claimed in claim 24, wherein the fastener is  
25 generally U-shaped.

30. A pole assembly, comprising:  
a first pole section;  
a second pole section;  
5 a first insert received within the first pole section;  
a second insert received within the second pole section;  
each of the first and second inserts having:  
a base;  
at least one deflectable projection extending from the base; and  
10 an aperture defined in the base; and  
a fastener having opposite ends received within the apertures of the first and  
second inserts, the fastener having a base and at least one deflectable  
projection extending from the base, the at least one deflectable projection of  
the fastener inter-engageable with the insert to limit inward deflection of  
15 the at least one deflectable projection of the insert.
31. The pole assembly as claimed in claim 30, wherein the at least one deflectable  
projection of the fastener includes an outwardly-protruding enlarged end engageable with a  
terminal end of one of the first and second inserts.  
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32. The pole assembly as claimed in claim 30, wherein the fastener further comprises a  
collar portion shaped to be received within at least one of the first and second inserts.
33. The pole assembly as claimed in claim 30, wherein the fastener is U-shaped.  
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34. The pole assembly as claimed in claim 30, wherein the ends of the fastener are  
insertable into the apertures of the first and second inserts to deflect the deflectable  
projections of the first and second inserts toward internal surfaces of the first and second  
pole sections.  
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35. The pole assembly as claimed in claim 30, wherein the ends of the fastener are  
each insertable into the apertures of the first and second inserts without generating  
appreciable deflection of the deflectable projections of the first and second inserts.

36. A method of assembling a pole, comprising:  
inserting a first insert into an end of a first pole section, the first insert having at least one inwardly-deflectable projection;  
5 inserting a fastener into an aperture in the first insert;  
limiting inward deflection of the at least one inwardly-deflectable projection with the fastener; and  
coupling the fastener to a second pole section.
- 10 37. The method as claimed in claim 36, wherein:  
the fastener comprises at least one projection, the at least one projection deflectable with respect to a remainder of the fastener; and  
inserting the fastener includes deflecting the at least one projection of the fastener.
- 15 38. The method as claimed in claim 36, wherein:  
the fastener comprises:  
at least one projection deflectable with respect to a remainder of the fastener; and  
an outwardly-protruding enlarged end;  
20 wherein inserting the fastener includes deflecting the at least one projection of the fastener until the outwardly-protruding enlarged end is inserted through the aperture in the insert.
39. The method as claimed in claim 36, wherein:  
25 the fastener is deformable; and  
inserting the fastener includes deforming at least a portion of the fastener.
40. The method as claimed in claim 39, wherein inserting the fastener includes resiliently deforming at least a portion of the fastener.
- 30 41. The method as claimed in claim 36, wherein the at least one inwardly-deflectable projection of the insert is deflected outwardly responsive to inserting the fastener.

42. The method as claimed in claim 36, wherein coupling the fastener to the second pole section includes performing the limiting and coupling steps with a second insert and a second pole section.